

Remarks

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Thus, all of claims 1-28 have been replaced by new claim 29, which essentially results from a combination of claims 1-6, with further support being found in the specification in general, and more particularly, paragraphs [0033], [0036] and [0037]. Separation methods 1-3 in claim 29 are referred to at page 15, last line; page 18, line 5; and page 19, line 16.

Claim 30 corresponds to the separation method in original claim 3, included among the Group I claims elected in response to the restriction requirement set forth in the earlier Office Action.

Applicants emphasize that cancellation of non-elected claims 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16 and 19-28 is without prejudice to their rights under 35 U.S.C. §121 to file a divisional application for the subject matter of these claims.

The patentability of the presently claimed invention over the disclosures of the references relied upon by the Examiner in rejecting the claims will be apparent upon consideration of the following remarks.

Initially, the rejection of claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Welch et al. (US '473), as well as the rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over this reference, have been rendered moot in view of the claim amendments. That is, as indicated above, new claim 29 incorporates the subject matter of claims 3-5, none of which is subject to either of these rejections.

The rejection of claims 2-3, 10, 12-14 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Welch et al. and further in view of Nagai et al. (US '280) is respectfully traversed.

It is Applicants' position that neither of the applied references discloses or suggests selecting one of the claimed three specific separation methods 1 to 3 to efficiently separate the solid catalyst components from the inert grain body, or separate the solid catalyst components from each other.

Even if the claimed three specific separation methods 1 to 3 may be individually known, the patentability of the amended claims resides not in these individual three separation methods 1 to 3 themselves, but in the fact that these three methods are selected from among numerous

conventional separation methods, based on the finding that these three separation methods are particularly advantageous for the claimed purposes, and one of the three separation methods is further selected for each particular case. In other words, the patentability of the amended claim resides in precluding any of numerous separation methods other than the claimed three separation methods.

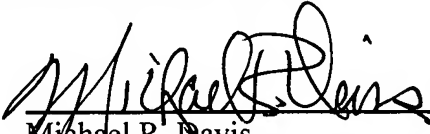
Welch et al. disclose only the separation method 1. But the separation method 1 is not always the right choice. According to the claimed arrangement, if the separation method 1 is not appropriate, it is possible to select one of the other two separation methods 2 and 3.

The Examiner applies the Nagai et al. reference for teaching a process of subjecting propylene, isobutylene, or tertiary butanol to vapor phase catalytic oxidation to produce an unsaturated aldehyde with a catalyst comprising molybdenum, bismuth, and iron. However, even if the Nagai et al. reference is combined with Welch et al. in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the result of such combination would still not suggest the presently claimed invention, for the reasons set forth above concerning the discussion of the Welch et al. reference.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that each of the grounds of rejection set forth by the Examiner has been overcome, and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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